

Memo

To: Montana State Library Commission

From: Tracy Cook, LDD Director

Date: November 30, 2018

Re: Freezing MSC Application Process in 2019

Cara Orban, the Director of the Montana Shared Catalog, and I are recommending that we freeze new applications for the Montana Shared Catalog in 2019. We recommend this freeze due to a desire to find solutions to increasing staff workloads as well as a need to focus staff energy on the addition of the Lewis & Clark Public Library to the system.

There is an application process to join the Montana Shared Catalog. We have this process to ensure that libraries that apply share similar values to those libraries already in the consortium and that they understand the process and obligations that are required by joining the MSC. We normally begin that process in December/January.

We have been aware for some time that the workload burden on MSC staff has surpassed sustainable levels due to increasingly complex and time-consuming configurations. We are exploring a variety of solutions from simplifying the structure of the MSC to possible new staffing to help with school libraries. We would like time to explore our options and see if we can find a solution.

In addition, we are adding the Lewis & Clark Public Library which is a large library system. From past experience we know that adding a library of this size is a complex process. We will be adding them in 2019 and would like to give staff permission to focus on adding this library to the system.

The Montana Shared Catalog Executive Board approved this proposal. Members and the Network Advisory Council have expressed support for this idea.